What is claimed is:

1. A method of treating pain in a patient comprising orally administering an opioid antagonist in an effective amount to provide analgesia in a patient in need thereof.

2. A method of treating pain in a patient comprising diagnosing a patient to be in need of analgesia and orally administering to said patient an effective amount of an opioid antagonist to provide analgesia in said patient.

3. A method of treating pain in a patient comprising orally administering an opioid antagonist in an effective amount to provide analgesia in a patient in need thereof, wherein said patient is not alcohol dependent.

4. A method of treating pain in a patient comprising diagnosing a patient to be in need of analgesia and orally administering to said patient an effective amount of an opioid antagonist to provide analgesia in said patient, wherein said patient is not alcohol dependent.

5. A method of treating pain in a patient comprising orally administering an opioid antagonist in an effective amount to provide analgesia in a patient in need thereof, wherein said patient is not opioid dependent.

6. A method of treating pain in a patient comprising diagnosing a patient to be in need of analgesia and orally administering to said patient an effective amount of an opioid antagonist thereof to provide analgesia in said patient, wherein said patient is not opioid dependent.

7. A method of treating pain in a patient comprising orally administering to said patient a pharmaceutical dosage form comprising an effective amount of an opioid antagonist to provide analgesia in said patient; and a stabilizer which inhibits the formation of at least one degradation product of the opioid antagonist.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein said opioid antagonist is in the form of a solid oral dosage form.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein said solid oral dosage form is a tablet or capsule.

10. The method of claim 8, wherein said solid oral dosage form provides a sustained release of the opioid antagonist.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein said sustained release dosage form is orally administered on a once daily or twice daily basis.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein said opioid antagonist is selected from the group consisting of naltrexone, naloxone, cyclazocine, nalmephene, cyclazocine, levallorphan, pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof, stereoisomers thereof, ethers thereof, esters thereof, and mixtures thereof.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein said opioid antagonist is naltrexone or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

14. The method of claim 12, wherein said opioid antagonist is naloxone or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

15. The method of claim 12, wherein said opioid antagonist is nalmefene or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

16. The method of claim 13, wherein said naltrexone is in an amount of from about 25 mg to about 75 mg, or an equivalent amount of pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

17. The method of claim 13, wherein said naltrexone is in the form of the hydrochloride salt.

18. The method of claim 1, further comprising administering to said patient a non-opioid analgesic.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein said non-opioid analgesic is selected from the group consisting of acetaminophen and non-steroidal anti-inflammatories.

20. An oral pharmaceutical composition comprising an analgesically effective amount of an opioid antagonist; and a sustained release carrier to provide a release of said opioid antagonist over a 12 to 24 hour period.

21. An oral pharmaceutical composition comprising an active agent consisting essentially of an opioid antagonist; and a sustained release carrier to provide a release of said opioid antagonist over a 12 to 24 hour period.

22. An oral pharmaceutical composition comprising an active agent combination consisting essentially of an opioid antagonist and at least one non-opioid analgesic.

23. An oral pharmaceutical composition comprising an opioid antagonist and at least one non-opioid analgesic, wherein said composition does not contain an opioid agonist.

24. An oral pharmaceutical composition comprising an analgesically effective amount of an opioid antagonist; and a stabilizer which inhibits the formation of at least one degradation product of the opioid antagonist.

25. The oral pharmaceutical composition of claim 20, wherein said composition is in the form of a solid oral dosage form.

26. The oral pharmaceutical composition of claim 25, wherein said solid oral dosage form is a tablet or capsule.

27. The oral pharmaceutical composition of claim 25, wherein said composition further comprises a sustained release carrier.

28. The oral pharmaceutical composition of claim 27, wherein said sustained release carrier provides a release of said opioid antagonist suitable for once daily or twice daily dosing.

29. The oral pharmaceutical composition of claim 20, wherein said opioid antagonist is selected from the group consisting of naltrexone, naloxone, cyclazocine, nalmephene, cyclazocine, levallorphan, pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof, stereoisomers thereof, ethers thereof, esters thereof, and mixtures thereof.

30. The oral pharmaceutical composition of claim 29, wherein said opioid antagonist is naltrexone or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

31. The oral pharmaceutical composition of claim 29, wherein said opioid antagonist is naloxone or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

32. The oral pharmaceutical composition of claim 29, wherein said opioid antagonist is nalmefene or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

33. The oral pharmaceutical composition of claim 30, wherein said naltrexone is in an amount of from about 25 mg to about 75 mg, or an equivalent amount of pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

34. The oral pharmaceutical composition of claim 30, wherein said naltrexone is in the form of the hydrochloride salt.

35. The oral pharmaceutical composition of claim 22, wherein said non-opioid analgesic is selected from the group consisting of acetaminophen and non-steroidal anti-inflammatories.